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Articles in Today's Clips Tuesday, December 11, 2007

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COULD YOU HAVE SAVED RICKY?

Chapter 10: The office search

December 11, 2007

BY JACK KRESNAK

FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Tenth of 14 parts

Through the fall of 2005, police looked in a lot of places for clues to Ricky Holland's disappearance, even obtaining a search warrant for a purple comforter that Lisa Holland had taken to a dry cleaner three days before Ricky was reported missing.

Advertisement

She'd driven 9 miles out of her way, bypassing several dry cleaners, to take the bedding to Okemos. Employees said the comforter had stains that looked like blood, but because of the cleaning fluids used, forensic tests never could identify what they were.

Police wanted to put pressure on the Hollands. Investigators had worked with the Army for weeks after a district court judge signed a warrant in late August to allow a search of Tim's office in Troy. As a civilian intelligence specialist, Tim dealt with classified information and worked behind locked doors in a space tucked discreetly inside a military contractor's office.

Finally, at 6 a.m. Oct. 5, seven law enforcement task force members assembled near the building, moving in after they saw Tim go inside about 7 a.m. They walked through the outer offices of Radian Inc. to an electronically secured door in back. Behind it was the windowless room where Tim worked alone. He seemed startled but agreed to help.

Police were seeking anything that might provide a clue about Ricky's whereabouts, including e-mails. Among several laptops and hard drives, Tim identified eight that he said contained only unclassified information. All were seized. From his cubicle, police took about a dozen photos of his kids, including a small one of Ricky, and retrieved flyers about the boy's disappearance from a wastebasket. They also impounded Tim's government-owned Chevrolet Malibu. Tim was sent home and told not to return to work until notified.

Intelligence to washing cars

A week later, Wayne Campbell, an intelligence specialist assigned by the Army to help with the search, called Sgt. Roy Holliday, the lead investigator, to say he'd examined one of the hard drives left behind. Tim had said it contained classified information, but Campbell found thousands of pornographic images Tim apparently had downloaded off the Internet.

Campbell thought Tim might have intentionally misled investigators. Tim had been calling Campbell from home, asking who had authorized the search and when he could come back to work. Tim told Campbell the investigation was focusing on a 19-year-old sex offender who lived in a trailer park near Williamston.

Holliday set Campbell straight: The task force was following up on all leads, but there was no 19-year-old prime suspect.

Though he'd lost his security clearance, Tim was called back to work in November for a few weeks. He was assigned to the Army's Tank-automotive and Armaments Command in Warren. His assignment was to wash command vehicles.

In an attempt to save his job, Tim tried to explain away the pornography. It would take weeks before he would learn his fate.

Meanwhile, back at home ...

A call in late October to Child Protective Services revived hopes that the four other young Holland children could be placed in state custody.

Ruth Sills, principal of Discovery Elementary School in Williamston, and preschool teacher Nancy Deal had information about Ricky's little brother Trevor. A month earlier, Deal had told CPS she'd seen no signs of abuse. But now, she was convinced the 3 1/2 -year-old was in danger. He had a small bruise below one eye and scratches on his right thigh. The call from the school came too late for CPS to get there before Trevor was to leave for the day, but Sills also alerted State Police Sgt. Frank Mraz. He hurried over.

In the principal's office, Trevor pointed out his "owies" and Mraz took photographs. Deal asked the boy questions, and Mraz reported that Trevor said his mother had hit him.

That afternoon, CPS investigator Kathleen Daugherty went to the Holland home. She saw the bruise on Trevor's cheek. Lisa said his sister, who would turn 3 in a few weeks, had hit him with a toy. She showed Daugherty a similar mark on the face of her 1 1/2 -year-old daughter.

Examining Trevor's legs, Daugherty found a faint, dime-size bruise on the back of his thigh and three small reddish marks that were scabbed. Lisa said he probably fell on a toy.

To Daugherty, the explanations seemed plausible and she saw no other marks on the children. She tried to talk with Trevor out of Lisa's presence, but in her view the boy, who had developmental delays, couldn't articulate much. Daugherty called Mraz to say there wasn't enough evidence of abuse to ask a judge to intervene. Mraz thought CPS wasn't trying hard enough.

The next day, he took the photos of Trevor's marks to Dr. Stephen Guertin, medical director of Sparrow Hospital's Regional Children's Center in Lansing. But Mraz didn't get what he was looking for -- confirmation of abuse. Guertin said the bruise on the boy's face could have been caused by a fall or a bump and the scratches by a dog, though he couldn't rule out other possibilities.

Still, Mraz and other detectives believed Trevor and his siblings were at risk. The investigators were pushing to file a petition -- on their own, if necessary -- to have the kids removed. Police contacted the Ingham County Prosecutor's Office, but prosecutors concurred that there wasn't enough evidence of abuse to go to court.

Prosecutor Stuart Dunnings III said later he was worried a judge would balk at removing the kids because of the slim proof. "You have to look at it from the point of view -- if we file this petition, are we going to get the kids out of the house?"

Complaint angers Lisa Holland

Deal called in a second complaint to CPS on Dec. 7, 2005, reporting that Trevor's back and thighs were bruised. Lisa said the boy had been horsing around in the garage with his father, but Deal said Trevor had told her, "Mommy did it." Deal said Trevor had spoken a word that sounded like "spatula," so he was given a doll and a spatula. He spanked the doll with it and said, "Just like that."

The next morning, CPS investigator Colin Parks went to the school to interview Trevor. Again, the boy was difficult to understand. Parks made note of the marks, took photos and went to the house. Lisa said that Trevor was playing in the garage with the other kids when she heard him yell. He told her he'd fallen.

Lisa wanted to know who called CPS. When Parks wouldn't say, she said she believed someone at the school was targeting her. Parks examined the three other children and saw no signs of abuse. He recommended that Lisa take the kids to the doctor. She said she would, but she never did.

After Parks left, Lisa called Sills, the principal, angry about yet another CPS investigation. She said the scratches came from a sibling and the bruises from roughhousing and it wasn't right for the school to call CPS about such minor incidents. Sills explained that the school was required to call CPS if any child came to school with unexplained injuries.

Lisa carried on as if nothing were wrong. She got her nails done and did her Christmas shopping, and when people asked about Ricky, she gave them a prayer card that read: "Jesus gives me life. In the memory of Ricky." She even wrapped gifts for Ricky -- toys he hadn't been allowed to play with from previous years -- writing on the gift tags: "To Ricky, from Santa."

Tim Holland tells of dilemma

Detectives tried again on Dec. 9, 2005, to get prosecutors to intervene by presenting a request for a warrant charging Lisa with abusing Trevor. Once again, they didn't succeed. There wasn't enough clear evidence.

In the midst of the investigations, Lisa called her Department of Human Services licensing worker to say she wanted to close her licensed foster home. The Hollands' license expired on Dec. 12, 2005, and was terminated on Jan. 12, 2006.

Trevor's school Christmas break began Dec. 19 and ended Jan. 3, 2006, but he did not report back. He was out sick for a week, then came to school on Monday, Jan. 9, but was absent again the next day. Sills told police the bus driver waited outside Trevor's home at the normal pickup time but the boy never came out. Sills called the house and left a message.

Later that day, Tim Holland called her, saying he had a dilemma. Trevor needed to stay in school, but Lisa was ready to pull him out and Tim couldn't bring himself to challenge his wife. He wanted Sills' help, but repeatedly asked that she not tell Lisa the two were talking.

To Sills, Tim Holland sounded helpless.

WEDNESDAY: "I can't afford to lose my job."

Contact **JACK KRESNAK** at 313-223-4544 or jkresnak@freepress.com.

[Chapter 9: Blood on a shirt](#)

Chapter 11: Bad news for Tim

Find this article at:

<http://www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071211/NEWS06/712110388&theme=RICKYHOLLAND122007>

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Detroit Free Press

Detroit news briefs

December 11, 2007

Dad to be charged in girl's death

Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy has scheduled a news conference this morning to announce charges against the biological father in the Nov. 3 death of his 2-year-old daughter.

The girl's mother, Nicole Holloway, 32, is facing felony murder charges, accused of beating her daughter to death at the Packard Motel on East Grand Boulevard in Detroit.

Holloway allegedly told a hotel manager that she had hit her child and that the police needed to be called.

Police said the woman admitted that she beat her daughter with her hands because she was angry with her.



Dr. Phil offers aid to dad, son

Could 'TV intervention' help local drinking duo

FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Tuesday, December 11, 2007

By Bryn Mickle

bmickle@flintjournal.com • 810.766.6383

CLIO - It was bad enough that a Montrose Township man turned the car keys over to his 13-year-old son because he was drunk. It was even worse that his son had been drinking, too.

And now it turns out the truck they were in was stolen.

But help could be on the way.

In the wake of the father-son arrest last month, producers for the "Dr. Phil" show have contacted Clio police asking them to pass along an offer for a televised intervention.

The doctor, however, might have to wait awhile - unless he wants to make a house call to the Genesee County Jail.

Genesee County Prosecutor David S. Leyton has authorized criminal charges against the father, 41, including car theft and contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

The man was arrested last month after police found him and his son sitting in a truck that had gotten stuck in the mud.

When officers asked why the son was behind the wheel, the man reportedly told police he had given the youth the keys because he'd had too much to drink.

Inside the truck, police found open beer and schnapps containers.

Police later found that the truck had been stolen from a garage where the man's brother fixes cars.

The father now faces the possibility of spending 5 years in prison if convicted on car theft charges. He also faces misdemeanor charges for allowing an unlicensed driver to operate a vehicle and possession of open intoxicants.

State prison records show he also is wanted as a parole absconder for an Isabella County larceny.

The Journal is not naming the father because he had not yet been arraigned as of Monday.

The son has been petitioned into juvenile court on drunken driving charges.

As for the syndicated TV program hosted by Phil McGraw, Clio Police Chief James McLellan said he has the producer's number and has promised to pass it on when he sees the father in court.



Muskegon Chronicle

Safe Kids group a leader in prevention

Sunday, December 09, 2007

In the Nov. 5 article "County investing in youth," I was disappointed to find there was no mention of an important and comprehensive community effort to keep Muskegon area kids safe. Safe Kids Muskegon, sponsored by Mercy General Health Partners, has worked tirelessly over the past seven years to promote changes in attitudes, behaviors, laws, and the environment to prevent accidental injury to children.

This year alone, Safe Kids Muskegon has performed 400 safety seat inspections, distributed more than 300 car seats, 500 bike helmets, 400 smoke detectors and other safety devices, as well as provided safety education to more than 21,000 parents, children, caregivers, and professionals.

Safe Kids Muskegon serves on many community task forces, working collaboratively with other agencies to reduce the risk of injury to children. As the fire marshal for the city of Muskegon Fire Department, I have worked closely with Safe Kids Muskegon for many years to promote home and fire safety.

This partnership has resulted in several programs, most notably the Fire Prevention and Education night at the Lakes Mall, which reached nearly 10,000 people this year with critical fire safety information. Furthermore, Safe Kids Muskegon utilizes several area fire department stations for car seat inspections, which not only promoted child passenger but also provides firefighters with an opportunity to connect with community members and promote fire safety. Safe Kids Muskegon also provides passenger safety. It is clear from my perspective that Safe Kids Muskegon has been successful in creating community partnerships to prevent injury.

In coordination with other Safe Kids groups across the nation, these efforts have lead to a 45-percent reduction in the child fatality rate, saving an estimated 38,000 young lives. This life-saving effort would not be possible without the strong and active support of many Muskegon community partners, which include law enforcement officers, firefighters, paramedics, health and safety experts, professional, educators, parents, government, and volunteers.

Accidental injury is the No. 1 killer of children from infancy to age 14 and I believe our community is blessed to have Safe Kids Muskegon working toward the prevention of accidental injury.

Safe Kids Muskegon has proven itself to be as effective program, well-integrated in the area school systems, parent organizations, non-profit groups, as well as many public and fire safety offices around our community. I encourage the Great Starts committee and Every Woman's Place to consider collaboration with an established community leader in unintentional injury prevention.

Major Metcalf

Muskegon Fire Marshal

Muskegon Fire Department

Good, clean fun at area dental fair

This year's Children's Dental Health Mall Event at the Lakes Mall provided a wonderful experience for more than 200 children seen for dental screenings, dental health education, comedy routines by Bozo and Ronald McDonald, Toothprints, face-painting, goodie bags and raffle drawing prizes donated by the Muskegon District Dental Society and other members of the dental community!

Thank you to all the community volunteers who made this event a great success!

Special thanks to Bozo the Clown, Ronald McDonald, the planning committee, Ferris State University and Grand Rapids Community College dental hygiene students for their educational displays and assistance at all the booths, local dentists and dental hygienists, members from Hackley Community Care Dental Services and Muskegon Family Care Dental Services.

The entire dental community and enthusiastic participants make this yearly event a fun time for everyone!

Jackie Balcom

Muskegon Township

Let them take their coats off for lunch

I picked up my granddaughter from school recently and noticed food on her coat. I couldn't believe it when she told me that they eat lunch with them on.

Upon checking with a few friends who work for other elementary schools during lunch, I was told the same thing went on at their schools. Apparently, they don't want the children to return to the halls or rooms to get their coats after they eat. Do the teachers eat in the lounge, their rooms or in restaurants with their winter coats on?

Why do the principals allow this? How hard would it be to set up a few extra tables to put their garments on; or at least let them sit on them. Not only do they get food on themselves, but how healthy is it to let them get hot and sweaty and then send them outside in the cold weather.

What has happened to good old common sense?

Linda Nelson

Norton Shores

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Pillows and pajamas

Ex-foster care child collects, shares what meant so much to him

By Frank DeFrank
Macomb Daily Staff Writer

A pillow and a pair of pajamas are hardly the stuff of dreams . But to some, they could make a world of difference.

Just ask Malcolm Oliver.

Oliver is a senior at South Lake High School in St. Clair Shores. The 17-year-old Eastpointe resident is likely on his way to college, courtesy of a football scholarship.

But football glory and a promising future were light years away nine years ago. Oliver, along with two older siblings, were the children of drug-addicted parents. For 18 months he found himself moved from one foster care facility to another -- without even a pillow to call his own.

“When I was in foster care, I slept in a lot of different places,” Oliver recalled. “It might not seem like (a pillow) does a lot, but it does. Little kids cherish something like that.”

About nine years ago, Oliver and his siblings moved in with their grandmother, Carol Hamilton. Rarely, she said, did the young man discuss his past.

But recently, a television program about a pajama drive for children triggered a conversation between Hamilton and Oliver. Hamilton was stunned by what her grandson revealed.

“He said the first night (he was in foster care) he slept in his clothes,” Hamilton recalled. “He said, ‘I didn’t even have a pillow. If you could have just given me a pillow. A pillow is something everybody wants.’”

Hamilton seized the opportunity to issue her grandson a challenge: “Maybe it’s time to give something back,” she told him.

That conversation encouraged Oliver to launch a pillow and pajama drive. He enlisted his fellow South Lake seniors to adopt the cause as a class project, and the effort quickly spread throughout the school and to others in the district.

To date, students and staff have collected 116 pillows, 235 pairs of pajamas

and more than \$400 to buy more. All are destined for delivery to foster children.

Oliver eschews credit for the charitable effort, choosing instead to cite his classmates and others associated with South Lake for making the drive successful.

“I thought it would be a good thing,” he said.

But South Lake Superintendent Deborah Thompson acknowledged Oliver’s contribution.

“Malcolm’s story moved our entire school community,” she said. “He let us see first-hand the power of small things like our own pillow and PJs; things we sometimes take for granted.

“His is a powerful holiday story of giving back to help others whose life experience he knows first-hand.”

Oliver doesn’t know about all that. He only hopes at least one foster child somewhere gets a pillow to call his own.

“It might make a difference,” he said. “Maybe it’ll help one kid.”

Click here to return to story:

http://www.macombdaily.com/stories/121107/loc_pillows001.shtml

MIRS

December 6, 2007

Adoptive Parent Equality Bill Debated

Employers who allow their workers to take time off with pay following the birth of a child would also have to provide the same benefit for workers who adopt, under legislation considered today in a House committee.

The bill would "level the playing field" for parents who adopt, according to bill sponsor Rep. Matt

GILLARD (D-Alpena), but the business lobby is concerned about any new state mandate, particularly

one that is traditionally worked out at the bargaining table.

The House Families and Children's Services Committee opted not to vote on **HB 5261** after testimony

this morning, as the members contemplate whether to mandate the leave for parents of adopted

newborns or all adopted children under 15.

The bulk of today's testimony came from 16-year-old Emily

KIELISZEWSKI, who first brought the issue

to Gillard's attention when he first took office in 2003 and she was a fifth grader. With Democrats now

controlling the gavel, Gillard's bill is now getting a hearing and

Kieliszewski, whose mother adopted three

young boys years after giving birth to three of her own, an opportunity to speak.

"Do you believe adopted children deserve the same rights and opportunities as biological children?"

Kieliszewski said. "My three adopted brothers may not have been born by my mother's body, but they were born by my mother's heart.

"If you answer 'yes,' you will be giving all children the same rights and opportunities as biological children."

Erin **KIELISZEWSKI**, Emily's mother, said her employer allowed her to take paid leave time after giving

birth to her three oldest children, but didn't allow such a benefit when she adopted.

She received a sympathetic ear from Committee Chair Brenda **CLACK** (D-Flint) and Ed **RIVET**, from

Michigan Right to Life, which supported the legislation on the basis that all children deserve the same treatment in the law.

The Michigan Chamber of Commerce filed its opposition to **HB 5261**, but didn't speak at the hearing.

Rep. John **STAHL** (R-North Branch) gave voice to the business community's hesitation, saying that

adoptive parents are eligible for certain tax credits and subsidies that biological parents are not. Stahl

praised parents who adopt, but expressed concerns about creating a lopsided standard between biological parents and those who adopt.

Stahl also focused on comments Emily Kieliszewski made that the act of giving birth is "the least" of what makes a mother — nurturing and preparing a child for the world in a loving environment is more

important. Stahl wanted to make the point that preserving the biological family unit is important for

numerous physical and mental health reasons and was trying to pin Kieliszewski down on a question about these perceptions.

The line of questioning appeared to make Clack feel as if Stahl was badgering the teenage witness. She asked Stahl to respect the age of the young woman testifying.

To this, Gillard, who was sitting next to Kieliszewski, said, "I think Emily will handle herself just fine with Rep. Stahl," Gillard said.

When Stahl finished his question, Kieliszewski responded that, "A mother is a mother regardless if she had a child in the womb or not."



They killed over custody fight, police say

Tuesday, December 11, 2007

By John Tunison

The Grand Rapids Press

ALLEGAN -- When Troy Tyo went missing last week from his Allegan home, Judi Yunginger suspected Tyo's ex-wife might be involved.

"She was a real control freak," said Yunginger, Tyo's aunt. "She tried so many times to make it so he couldn't have the kids at all."

Police believe a bitter custody battle over the divorced couple's two children spawned a plan to kill Tyo. And early Dec. 3, as Tyo was preparing to leave for his job at Perrigo, Dena Thompson's new husband of eight months allegedly carried out the attack, detectives said in court while testifying to get an arrest warrant Monday.

"She had requested that her current husband kill her ex-husband," said Allegan County sheriff's Detective Morgan Sullivan.

"She was aware (her husband) left with a baseball bat and was going to confront and assault Troy," Sullivan testified, reciting admissions made by the wife.

Thompson, 38, and her husband, Kristofer James Thompson, both of Gobles, were arraigned Monday on charges of open murder in the death of Tyo, 36, whose body was discovered Saturday in a former gravel pit in Van Buren County, a mile from the Thompson residence.

Police also have arrested two other people, a man and a woman, described as accessories in the case. An investigator said one of the two other suspects allegedly drove Kristofer Thompson to a spot near Tyo's home in Dumont Creek Estates the morning of the killing.

Names of the two people were not released, pending their arraignments today in Allegan County District Court.

Testimony by the two detectives gave details of the attack, with one detective describing how Kristofer Thompson "indicated he had hit Tyo with a baseball bat and later cut his throat."

According to court documents, police said Thompson allegedly ambushed Tyo, hitting him with the bat, loaded him into Tyo's pickup, then used the knife when he began to move.

Police arrested Kristofer Thompson after they went to his house Saturday and discovered he had two stab wounds to his side from an apparent fight. About the same time, Tyo's body was found inside his white pickup in a nearby gravel pit, amid signs someone unsuccessfully had tried to set the inside of the truck on fire.

Detectives testified Dena Thompson helped bandage her husband's wounds. They have store video of her buying gauze.

Court records show a September 2006 divorce between Tyo and his ex-wife brought bitterness, chiefly over custody of the couple's two children, Brittany, 10, and Allie, 6.

The two were expected in court as recently as Nov. 21 over attempts by Dena Thompson to get sole

physical custody, change the children's schooling from Allegan to Gobles and allow Tyo only supervised parenting time. But she dropped the effort the day before the hearing.

Tyo's relatives, including Yunginger, claimed Dena Thompson figured she would lose.

The problems began long before the split was final, court records show. When Dena Thompson filed for divorce in February 2006, Tyo accused his then-wife of having an affair with Kristofer Thompson and asked a judge to prevent the children from being in the man's presence.

All three worked for Perrigo at the time. Dena moved to Gobles during the separation and re-married in April 2007. Tyo also recently re-married.

After the divorce, the strife between the two worsened, particularly in July when Dena Thompson accused Tyo of slapping one of their children. Tyo's parenting time was briefly suspended, but it was reinstated after a Children's Protective Services worker dismissed the complaint.

Tyo's death -- and the weekend arrests -- stunned many in Gobles, a small town south of Allegan where families mark generations. Friends, who know Dena Thompson by her nickname "Winky," had just celebrated a reunion for Gobles High School's class of 1987.

"Winky is just one of the most adorable girls you'd meet," said a friend, who grew up with her and remained close through the years.

"It's not real. I've known her my whole life. Winky and Troy are two of the best people I know."

The woman did not want her name used because she is close to both families and did not want to offend Tyo's family. She said it was difficult to think of the couple's two daughters losing both parents. Both parents adored their children.

"They were always happy to see mom, always happy to see dad," the woman said.

Another friend was "completely astonished," saying Winky Thompson comes from a "good family, nice family in Gobles. It seems completely senseless. I can't wrap my hands around it, really."

She, too, did not want her name used.

On Monday, relatives and friends of both Tyo and the Thompsons filled the courtroom.

Kellie Greene, a cousin of Tyo, was emotional after the arraignment.

"I'm outraged," she said. "What kind of sick individual can do this? How can she possibly live with herself?"

Rick Day, Allegan's mayor and a friend of the Tyo family, called the killing senseless.

"I think (Dena) just hated him. She just didn't want him to be happy," he said.

-- Press staff writer John Agar contributed to this story.

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KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

Police say custodyfight may have setmurder in motion

Tuesday, December 11, 2007

BY REX HALL JR.

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388-7784

ALLEGAN -- When Troy Paul Tyo went missing last week from his Allegan home, suspicion soon fell on Tyo's ex-wife.

Now Tyo's former spouse is one of four people police believe may be connected with his murder.

Police suspect a custody battle over the divorced couple's two children may have spawned a plan to kill Tyo. And early Dec. 3, as Tyo was preparing to leave for his job at Perrigo, Dena Thompson's new husband of eight months allegedly carried out the attack, detectives said in court while testifying to acquire an arrest warrant Monday.

"She had requested that her current husband kill her ex-husband," Allegan County sheriff's Detective Morgan Sullivan said.

"She was aware (her husband) left with a baseball bat and was going to confront and assault Troy," Sullivan testified, recounting admissions he said were made by the wife.

Thompson, 38, and her husband, 28-year-old Kristofer James Thompson, both of Gobles, were arraigned Monday on charges of open murder in the death of Tyo, 36, whose body was discovered Saturday in a former gravel pit in Van Buren County, a mile from the Thompson residence.

Another man and woman described as accessories in the case were arrested Monday and are expected to be arraigned today, police said. An investigator said one of the two allegedly drove Kristofer Thompson to a spot near Tyo's home in Dumont Creek Estates the morning of the killing. Their names were not released.

Police recovered Tyo's fire-damaged 2005 GMC Sierra pickup truck Saturday at the gravel pit. Investigators believe the body of a white male found in the truck is that of Tyo, but are awaiting results of an autopsy for confirmation, Undersheriff Jim Hull said.

Testimony by the two detectives showed how they believe the attack on Tyo unfolded. One detective described how Kristofer Thompson "indicated he had hit Tyo with a baseball bat and later cut his throat."

According to court documents, police said Thompson allegedly ambushed Tyo, hitting him with the bat, loaded him into Tyo's pickup, then used the knife when he began to move.

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"I'm outraged," she said. "What kind of sick individual can do this?"

Rick Day, Allegan's mayor and a friend of the Tyo family, called the killing senseless.

Day, a close friend of Tyo for more than 25 years, described Tyo, a volunteer firefighter with the city of Allegan for more than 10 years, as a laid-back man who loved his children dearly and enjoyed hunting, camping and riding his motorcycle.

"We graduated from high school and I went to college and the following Monday (Troy) started work at Perrigo," Day said. "I don't think I've ever met anyone who had a bad thing to say about him and that's the God's honest truth. He was low-key, he was just Troy."

Gazette News Service

contributed to this report.

What's next

Dena and Kristofer Thompson, who were being held on bond Monday in the county jail, are scheduled to be back in court Dec. 19 for hearings on evidence against them, a district court official said.

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ClickOnDetroit.com

Tara Grant's Sister Takes Stand

POSTED: 11:07 am EST December 11, 2007

UPDATED: 1:04 pm EST December 11, 2007

MOUNT CLEMENS, Mich. -- Alicia Standerfer, sister of Tara Grant, testified Tuesday morning in the second day of the trial of Stephen Grant in the death and mutilation of Tara, his wife.

Standerfer testified for about 20 minutes, with questions centering primarily around her relationship with her sister.

Prosecution tried to paint the relationship as a loving one, while defense questioned Standerfer about an argument that she and Tara got into during Thanksgiving 2006.

The prosecution was attempting to characterize the relationship between the sisters as strained, seeing each other infrequently.

Tara and Stephen Grant's children are staying with Standerfer in Ohio, but Stephen's sister, Kelly Utykanski, has been in court to push for unsupervised visits.

Previous Story

[Second Day Of Grant Trial Begins Tuesday](#)

RELATED TO STORY



Long on memories, short on decent care

December 11, 2007

HELEN KOZLOWSKI-HICKS

During the holiday season, many of us embrace some form of family tradition as we gather for annual celebrations. Maybe it will be using great-grandma's recipe for giblet gravy or putting that special star atop the tree or lighting a candle for grandpa who passed away a few years ago.

My own family will head to my mom's house to celebrate, because her home really belongs to all of us, at least in our hearts. Grandma is the family matriarch, the living historian who reminds us of past holidays and what makes us a family. We listen to her stories and heed the lessons they teach us.

Advertisement

And yet, right here in southeastern Michigan, in about 300 licensed long-term care facilities and in countless unlicensed and unregulated facilities, thousands of seniors who are mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers will be forgotten -- and in too many cases, neglected or abused. Some, left for months with little or no stimulation or who have been overmedicated to keep them quiet, will slip deeper into dementia.

This forgotten phenomenon is of great concern to those of us who value our aging population and who advocate on their behalf. We continue to be shocked at the neglect and abuse that continues in nursing homes, homes for the aged and foster-care facilities for seniors.

We are equally shocked that a population of aging baby boomers -- an unprecedented number of citizens moving toward the possibility of life in these same facilities -- is not paying greater attention to what is happening with senior care.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics tells us that as of July 1, 2005, there were 78.2 million baby boomers. By the year 2030, 57.8 million of them will be age 65.

Our community should be deeply concerned about the staffing ratio in long-term care facilities; often they carry a 1-to-12 ratio of staff to residents. More often than not, staff members are not tending to residents' most-personal needs, such as changing soiled undergarments, providing comforting baths or tending to open bedsores. Many times, residents who cannot feed themselves will go hungry.

During the holiday season, many of us will be overcome with the giving spirit -- the urge to find another human being to help. Often, we are drawn to the faces of children.

But this year, perhaps we should focus at least part of our attention on the forgotten population. We should make the mental leap and consider the volume of baby boomers who will be considering long-term care in the near future. Will there be adequate facilities? Will staffing laws be changed to better meet the needs of individuals who cannot help themselves?

Take a moment to visit a senior whose family is no longer valuing the gift of age. Consider spending an hour every other week simply reading to a nursing home resident, or call your grandmother or grandfather to thank them for all that they have done.

Equally important, begin to advocate for change in laws now designed to minimally protect the most vulnerable in our

<http://www.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=Long+on+memories%2C+short+on+dece...> 12/11/2007

society and generously line the pockets of corporations that have begun to purchase dozens of nursing homes.

We can fix what is happening in these long-term care facilities. We can do it for the seniors who live in these facilities today, or for the baby boomers who will be living there tomorrow.

HELEN KOZLOWSKI-HICKS is executive director of Citizens for Better Care, the 38-year-old nonprofit organization that holds most of the state's contracts to provide ombudsman and elder abuse training. She also is an Advisory Board member for the Area Agency on Aging, 1B. Contact her at 313-832-6387.

Find this article at:

<http://www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071211/OPINION02/712110325/1070>

☐ Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.



KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

Food, volunteers in demand for 15th annual holiday drive

Tuesday, December 11, 2007

BY CEDRIC RICKS

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KALAMAZOO -- Organizers of the Greater Kalamazoo Area Holiday Food Drive are hoping hundreds of people will come out Friday and Saturday to help sort, pack and deliver holiday food baskets.

Those baskets will provide a week's worth of food to 1,500 families in the Kalamazoo area, said Monica Poucher, chairman of this year's food drive.

Students in Kalamazoo and Mattawan schools, along with people at area businesses, have been collecting nonperishable food items during the past several weeks, Poucher said.

"We are still collecting food," she said Monday.

Nonperishable food items can be brought Friday to the Hazel Gray Building at the Kalamazoo County Expo Center and Fairground at 2900 Lake St. in Kalamazoo.

Items will be sorted for food baskets on Friday, and the food will be packed and delivered to families on Saturday.

The effort, in its 15th year, was started by Detective Harold West of the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety.

West, vice chairman of this year's food drive, is trying to involve as many people in the effort as possible.

"This is a lot of work," West said. "I'm trying to turn it over so if something happens to me this keeps going. It's a community event; it's not just me."

The food drive has grown substantially. Forty families were served during its first year.

Also, the community's involvement has deepened. Many families participate annually. Some volunteers were children when they first helped sort food and are now adults who return to assist the effort.

West started the holiday food drive as a way of repaying kindness extended to his family. As a child in a family of 11, West often looked forward to the holiday food baskets made available.

"This is a way of giving back," he said.

How to help

What: Volunteers are needed to help with this year's Greater Kalamazoo Area Holiday Food Drive, designed to help provide a week's worth of food for 1,500 families.

Friday: Volunteers can help sort food for food baskets starting at

6 p.m.

Saturday: Volunteers can help pack and deliver food baskets to area families starting around 9:30 a.m.

Where: Both days volunteers should go to the Hazel Gray Building at the Kalamazoo County Expo Center and Fairground, 2900 Lake St.

For more information: Call 349-8023.

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Detroit Free Press

December 11, 2007

Canned goods sought in food bank drive

The Detroit Board of Police Commissioners, in partnership with Gleaners Community Food Bank of Detroit, is taking donations of nonperishable canned goods and unused personal hygiene items through Dec. 18.

The items will be distributed to needy Detroiters.

Donations can be dropped off at the Office of the Chief Investigator, 2111 Woodward Ave., Suite 800, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. or at the Board of Police Commissioners' Office, 1300 Beaubien St., Room 328, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

*Compiled by Ben Schmitt and
Zachary Gorchow.*

Help replant Brother Dan's 'Giving Tree'

By Christina Rohn News-Review Staff Writer

Brother Dan's Food Pantry is need of community support after someone stole more than 30 Christmas gifts from the "Giving Tree" at St. Francis Xavier Church Friday.

The gifts had been donated by church members to be given to people in need through [Brother Dan's Food Pantry](#).

"It was like a punch in the stomach," said Mary Moellering, director of the food pantry. "There's so many people who are homeless, and knowing someone took their gifts is really upsetting."

Moellering said, at this time, workers at the pantry are unsure of the cash value of the items that were taken.

"We have no idea how much is gone — we're going to do inventory on Monday (Dec. 17) morning," she said. "We're going to have to scurry at the last minute to figure out whose presents are gone and go shopping at the last minute to replace them."

The pantry is currently accepting monetary donations from the public in the form of cash or check. Moellering said if a person is sending a check, make it out to Brother Dan's Food Pantry, and write in the "notes" section, the Giving Tree.

Where to send contributions

If sending a check through the mail, address it to Brother Dan's Food Pantry, 415 State St., Petoskey, Mich. 49770.

Moellering said all money must be sent in by Dec. 17 before 1 p.m. — when pantry volunteers plan to go shopping.

"We will be handing them (the gifts) out to clients on the 18th," she said. "If we end up with more money than what was taken, we're going to put it back into the community for an outreach program."

To volunteer

Moellering said if anyone would be interested in volunteering to shop for the pantry, contact them at 347-7423.

Moellering said, even through this difficult time, they are praying for the person who stole the items.

"I would like to say to the community to keep the person in their prayers who took this money, because in economic times the way they are, they must be in need," she said. "Be aware of this and help."

[Click here](#) to read the first story on the stolen Christmas gifts.



Tuesday, December 11, 2007

Home heating aid funds focus of fight

Cold-weather states feel the pinch as cost of heating oil rises and Congress debates bills.

Andrew Miga / Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- Matilda Winslow counts on home heating assistance to survive New England's harsh winters. The 75-year-old widow gets by on a monthly \$860 Social Security check, but she can't keep up with heating oil costs that top \$3 per gallon.

So she turns down the heat, pulls on sweaters, piles on blankets and wears warm socks to bed. When temperatures really plummet, she leaves her home in Boston's Dorchester neighborhood and stays at her daughter's house.

"It's miserable," Winslow says. "How do they expect me to live and heat my home?"

Like Winslow, millions of poor and elderly people on fixed incomes rely on heating assistance to help pay their heating bills. But with home heating oil prices surging to record levels and wintry storms already hitting many states, Congress and President Bush can't agree on how much money to give the government's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, which provides heating and cooling subsidies for the poor. Bush recently vetoed a sweeping Democratic health and education spending bill that included roughly \$2.4 billion heating aid for the poor this winter. The amount was \$480 million more than he requested -- and would have boosted the energy assistance program by about \$250 million from last year.

Lawmakers from cold-weather states are still pressing for the extra money before Congress adjourns this year. They say funding has been outpaced by rising fuel prices.

"It's really kind of scary," said Mark Wolfe, executive director of the National Energy Assistance Directors' Association, which represents state-run low income energy assistance programs. "We're going to be looking at an awful lot of hardship."

The fuel aid is caught up in the broader fight between Congress and the White House over where to draw the line on federal spending.

The fight pits cold-state lawmakers who say the program is underfunded against Republican leaders who want to keep spending increases down. Some lawmakers from warm-weather states complain the program favors cold-weather regions.

Until this year's standoff is resolved, state agencies and others on the local level who distribute federal fuel aid can't be sure about how much money they will have to work with this winter.

The Energy Department estimates heating oil costs will jump about 26 percent this winter. That's an average increase of \$375 for customers. Propane costs will rise about 20 percent. Natural gas customers can expect to pay about 10 percent more.

Wolfe predicts an even higher jump for heating oil than the government does. He expects households to pay an average \$2,157 this winter, a \$693 increase from last winter.

The Northeast, which is more reliant on oil heat than other regions, has been rocked by record-breaking oil prices and is feeling the pinch.

Rhode Island is decreasing benefit levels and expects to help about 15 percent fewer households than last year, Wolfe said. The state reduced its average primary grant benefit from \$475 to \$350.

In Massachusetts, where about 40 percent of homes use oil heat, officials said they were so concerned about rising prices they recently provided an additional \$15 million in state funds for fuel assistance.

Officials in Maine, one of the country's coldest states, worry that poor, elderly and working families will be more vulnerable as winter wears on and they use up their fuel aid for the season.

Homes there use about 860 gallons a year, on average. At current prices of roughly \$3.20 per gallon, state

officials predict it will cost an average household about \$2,750 for heating oil this winter.

Find this article at:

<http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071211/POLITICS/712110379>

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Old Newsboys ready to hawk papers for kids

FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Tuesday, December 11, 2007

By Theresa Roach

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FLINT - As a single mother of four, Carol Garcia understands the financial pressures that struggling families face each day, especially during the holiday season.

About 25 years ago, Garcia began volunteering with The Old Newsboys of Flint while employed at General Motors' Service and Parts Headquarters in Grand Blanc Township. There, she coordinated donations to The Old Newsboys.

"I was always grateful, being a single parent with four kids, that I never had to use a program like this one. I could see where people would have such a struggle," said Garcia, who retired in 2003 and whose children now are grown.

"There are people that come in, and it's their first year here, because they've lost their job or something. It's hard for them to come in, but they know the kids need it."

On Friday, volunteers like Garcia will take to the streets selling newspapers in an effort to raise enough money to make a difference for a child on Christmas morning.

Each year the organization earns about \$150,000-\$175,000 from the Paper Sale, said Executive Director Laurie Goff.

So far this year, the Newsboys helped 8,000 children, she said. On average, the organization gives to 8,600 children each year.

QUICK TAKE

Paper sale
The Old
Newsboys of
Flint will
accept
applications for
Christmas
Boxes until
Dec. 21.
Adults must
apply in person
at the
organization
office, 3216
Lapeer Road in
Flint.
For details
about
Christmas
Boxes or to
make a
donation, call
(810) 744-
1840.

Proceeds go toward the organization's various efforts, including its current Christmas Box initiative. Volunteers pack boxes with toys, clothes and personal items. Families or individuals must pick up the boxes from the office.

"Christmas has always been important to the kids, and a lot of families are really low on money, especially now and in this area, and their kids don't get a present," said Gary Greenway, a volunteer.

"They've always been told if they're good, Santa will take care of them, But if their parents can't get them presents, they think 'I was good, so why didn't Santa bring me anything?'"

Volunteers will accept any monetary donation for the newspapers, said Greenway.



Toys for Tots fundraiser ready to sleep by street again

GRAND BLANC

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Tuesday, December 11, 2007

By Holly Klaft

Journal Staff Writer

GRAND BLANC - Joe Abbott has spent the night in a tent in front of Little Joe's Restaurant, shoveling snow just to stay warm.

Huddled in a sleeping bag on the sidewalk, he's drawn curious looks from police and passers-by.

Those wintery camping efforts have yielded big rewards for Toys for Tots. Abbott's annual Polar Camp Out holiday fundraiser has brought in about \$12,000 in toys and monetary donations in the past two years.

On Thursday, Abbott, a part-owner of Little Joe's, once again will spend the night on the streets of downtown Grand Blanc to raise awareness about area poverty and encourage others to donate to Toys for Tots.

"Some people call it a sleep-out, but I really just stay up," said Abbott, 33.

Toys for children younger than 18 months and those ages 10 to 12 years are especially needed this year, he said.

"I know it's tough times, but even if it's a \$5 toy, every little bit helps," Abbott said.

Details: www.littlejoesrestaurant.com

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KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

Gifts for those in need Kids lend a hand in annual effort to serve area's needy children

Tuesday, December 11, 2007

BY JULIE MACK

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KALAMAZOO

At one table, students were folding oversized Christmas stockings. At another, they were sorting donations of candy, toys and hair-care items.

The scene in the basement of the American Red Cross was familiar to anyone who's ever assembled holiday packages for the needy.

But in this case, the volunteers were teenagers usually on the receiving end of community projects. One group was from the Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home and the other was from Croyden Avenue School, which serves severely disabled children.

"Our students are so used to receiving from the community, and this is a way for them to give back," said Corlis Watkins, an employee of the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency and coordinator of the holiday project.

KRESA serves Kalamazoo County students with a variety of special needs, from physical disabilities to emotional impairments to juvenile-home residents. Starting Monday and continuing through Wednesday, students from all of KRESA's programs are helping assemble gift packages for needy children.

KRESA staffers launched the project three years ago and joined forces with the Red Cross. This year, KRESA staffers and students and other volunteers will create 1,700 oversized Christmas stockings to be distributed to 13 social-service agencies.

Each package will contain personal-care items, a book, school supplies, clothing such as a hat and mittens or stockings and a toy.

Most of the items come from toy drives held at KRESA sites, as well as other area schools, including Chime Elementary, Oakwood Academy, The Gagie School, and Parchment and Kalamazoo Christian schools. Area businesses also donate cash and toys.

Peggy Hopkins of the Red Cross credits Watkins for stretching the cash donations through careful shopping at clearance tables throughout the year.

"She makes \$4,000 stretch like nobody's business," Hopkins said. "She probably gets \$12,000 worth of stuff for the \$4,000 she has to work with."

While one goal is to help underprivileged children in the Kalamazoo area, another is to boost the self-worth of KRESA students.

Monday morning's crew included a half-dozen students from the juvenile home.

“This is good,” one 16-year-old girl said. “At first, it was just like, OK, we get out of school to do this, but now that I’m here, it’s nice. It’s fun.

“It makes me feel very good on the inside.”

KRESA holiday drive

The Kalamazoo

Regional Educational Service Agency and the American Red Cross are accepting donations through Wednesday

for their holiday stocking project. Donations of toys, books, personal-care items and money can be dropped off at the

American Red Cross building at 5640 Venture Court, off Stadium Drive in Oshtemo Township.

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Stockings by students

Rochester class gives to charity

By BRANDI TRAPP

Special to The Oakland Press

First-grade students are giving up their allowances this holiday season to help stuff stockings for children who could use some kindness. Kathy McCurdy's first-grade class at McGregor Elementary School in Rochester is stuffing stockings for Childhelp, a nonprofit organization to help children who are victims of abuse and neglect.

The stockings will be distributed at the holiday party at Childhelp's office Dec. 20. Students are encouraged to use their own money to help buy toys to stuff the stockings, and some parents match their child's donations. "This year, I am blessed to have an incredibly empathetic, motivated and vivacious class," McCurdy said. "When I suggested we help the children of Childhelp, they were thrilled to get involved." She became involved with Childhelp when she witnessed one of her students being taken directly from school and placed in the foster care system.

"There are some things in life you will never forget. This was one of those instances," she said

To donate additional stockings or make a donation to Childhelp, call Ann Marie Lesniak at (248) 353-0921.

Click here to return to story:

http://www.theoaklandpress.com/stories/121107/loc_20071211151.shtml



THE BAY CITY TIMES

Donate yarn for prison knitters

Monday, December 10, 2007

TIMES STAFF

Call it a holiday donation with a beautiful return.

You donate some yarn - even that old bag of stuff in the basement - and a group of prisoners at the Saginaw Correctional Facility uses it to knit warm winter accessories for needy children.

A group has been meeting to knit at the prison for four years and already has donated materials to a number of schools and nonprofit groups in the area.

The prisoners will use the yarn to create hats, mittens and scarves.

The only stipulation for donated yarn is that it not be black or gray as such colors are not permitted at the correctional facility.

Just for Kids, a Bay County nonprofit organization, is sponsoring a yarn drive through Dec. 26 to help with the collection effort. Those who wish to make a donation may do so at the following locations:

In Bay City

* Maier & Associates Financial Group

5982 West Side Saginaw Road

* Graff Chevrolet

3636 E. Wilder Road

In Saginaw

* The Magic Bean

5789 State St. Suite No. 3

* Bader Bros.

6150 Bay Road

In Midland

* Yeo & Yeo

6018 Eastman Ave.

* Tim Boychuck - State Farm

967 S. Saginaw Road



Suit donations sought

Tuesday, December 11, 2007

GRAND RAPIDS -- Hang onto that old suit and tie. The law firm Siebers Mohny PLC, 99 Monroe Ave., Suite 900, is accepting donations of gently used business attire through Dec. 19 for the ninth annual Santa Brings a Lawsuit drive. Collected items are donated to Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids for distribution to individuals who are not able to purchase professional clothing for job interviews. The donations also help Goodwill retail customers. The sales provide funding for job training and placement services through Goodwill Industries.

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